

SARL NEWS - SUNDAY 06 MARCH 2011

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'ARMI' and follow the links for details. PLEASE NOTE: for audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe to receive future bulletins by e-mail. Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria, with relays on 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB.

SILENT KEYS

It is with deep regret that the passing of two radio amateurs must be announced. The key of Bernardus van Heerden, ZR3BVH, went silent on 20 February 2011. We extend our condolences to his family and friends.

The key of Dennis Shannon, ZS6JDS, went silent at 05:00 on 23 February 2011. Dennis had been ill for some time. We extend our condolences to his wife Carol, family and friends.

(PAUSE)

In the news today

CPUT TO BUILD S-BAND TRANSMITTER FOR UK SATELLITE

SARL COUNCIL TO MEET THIS WEEK

UK RADIO AMATEUR GETS FUNDING TO STUDY DIGITAL EMCMM SYSTEMS FOR RAYNET

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting news items.

CPUT TO BUILD S-BAND TRANSMITTER FOR UK SATELLITE

The Cape Peninsula University of Technology has been invited by the UK to build an S-band transmitter for the first satellite to be launched by the UK Space Agency in December 2011. UKube1 is an exciting and novel collaboration between the UK Space Agency, industry and academia, and is envisaged as the pilot for a full UK CubeSat programme.

Strathclyde University, who are coordinating the project, approached CPUT to build the transmitter. A similar unit is already under construction at CPUT for its own 3U CubeSat.

Can South Africa build its own satellite launch facility?

Naledi Pandor, Minister of Science and Technology, at the SANSAs launch said that South Africa will take the satellite launch facility which was constructed for the Greensat project many years ago out of the mothballs and develop it into a modern day launch facility. This however is a long term project. Now an entrepreneur, Mark Comninos, formed a company Marcom Aeronautics and Space with the express purpose of bringing to market a two stage expendable launch vehicle the “CHEETAH-1 CSLV”, aimed at reducing South Africa’s dependence on foreign launch services and provide accommodating satellite launch services for the global satellite industry.

Mark will be one of the main speakers at the SA AMSAT Space Symposium which will be held at Vodaworld on 2 April 2011. Amongst the other speakers are Dr Sandile Malinga the CEO of SANSAs, and the two SA AMSAT CubeSat project leaders John Willescroft and Hannes Coetzee, as well as Dr. L.J. du Toit of EMSS Antennas, the company responsible for the development, production, commissioning and factory support of the KAT-7 receivers. For details and to book visit www.amsatsa.org.za. Make use of the early bird discount. Special rates are offered for SARL and SA AMSAT Members.

SARL COUNCIL TO MEET THIS WEEK

The council of the SARL meets this week for the annual strategy session to plan for the year ahead. This is the only time council members meet face to face as all other meetings are conducted via teleconference. The outcome of the meeting and plans for the next year are presented at the AGM in the annual report which will also be available on line at the time of the Annual General Meeting.

UK RADIO AMATEUR GETS FUNDING TO STUDY DIGITAL EMC COMM SYSTEMS FOR RAYNET

A member of The United Kingdom’s Radio Amateurs’ Emergency Network or RAYNET has received two months’ funding to examine how that group could best use data communications to support police and other services.

Howard Winter, G1BYY, a member of Mid-Herts RAYNET, made an application to the Vodafone World of Difference Scheme in November. According to the RSGB News, Winter will spend two months undertaking his own research and experimentation, collating the work that has already been done by RAYNET Groups and comparing the experiences of members experimenting with data. He will then be producing documents that will nationally be available to groups of all affiliations.

An increasing demand from emergency response services using RAYNET to have it provide data links has led many groups to experimenting on a variety of digital systems. RAYNET members are now using APRS to track vehicles responding to incidents in remote locations, transmitting photographs from the scenes of emergencies and sending data files back to their control and command centres.

VHF ACTIVITY ON THE INCREASE

Several radio amateurs in the Johannesburg and Cape Town areas have started to experiment with SSB on 2 metre. Recently they decided to also use 144,200 MHz SSB as the country-wide calling frequency. This frequency has been in use for a number of years by division 2 and 5 stations and many contacts have been made on SSB. If you are only equipped with FM then try 144,400 MHz the FM DX channel. Very long distance contacts have been made on this frequency from the east coast of the RSA to Reunion Island on both FM and SSB and over land from Richards Bay to Port Elizabeth. Amateurs in Port Elizabeth monitor this FM channel from 19:30 CAT until 20:00 CAT for stations in Mosselbay and East London. At 20:00 CAT they change frequency to 144,200 MHz SSB for longer distances to Durban and beyond.

Likewise there has been a revival of interest in the 6 metre band too. Quite a number of stations became active again in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth using the frequency of 50,200 MHz SSB.

To get the best long distance results on VHF you should use around 100 Watt and a high gain horizontally polarized Yagi beam antenna with a LNA.

CONTEST NEWS

Sunday 6 March 2011 - SARL Hamnet 40 m Simulated Emergency Contest. This SSB Contest is open to all Radio Amateurs in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Mozambique, Lesotho, Marion Island and South African Antarctica. Only contacts with these areas will count. The contest will run from 12:00 to 14:00 UTC. Participate as a Single operator stationary mobile; Single operator portable; Multi-operator portable or Single operator base station.

Saturday 12 March 2011 - SARL March Madness YL Sprint. This is a fun activity to celebrate International Women's Day (8 March) between radio amateurs in Southern African countries. Call "YL Sprint." The Sprint will run from 09:00 to 10:00 UTC. The exchange is a RS report and YL or OM.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is at moderate levels. Sunspots continue to pop up in various locations on the sun. Currently Sunspot 1 164 in the north and 1 166, which rotated into view on the eastern limb, remain the largest regions. A new sunspot that formed between 1 164 and 1 166 was numbered 1 167. The effective sunspot number is expected to be around 65 for the coming week.

15 m will provide the best opportunities for DX followed by 20 m. Conditions to India will be good from the afternoon till after sunset. During the afternoons conditions will be good towards Europa on 15 m, later to be followed by good 20 m openings. Good 15 m contacts with the USA are possible during the evenings. Contacts with Australia are possible on 20 m after sunset. 15 and especially 20 m openings to Brazil and South America are possible during the afternoons.

With the good 15 and 20 m openings 17 m will also be full of surprises. With the higher sunspot activity 10 m may also show signs of life around mid day.

For the CW and digital enthusiasts 30 m may be very rewarding with openings to many parts of the world.

Locally 40 m is the work horse for contacts around the country with 20 and 30 m also being very useful for contacts over the longer distances. 80 m will be best during the early mornings and late afternoons as well as over the shorter distances.

80 m is the frequency of choice during the evenings.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

6 March - SARL Hamnet 40 Metre Simulated Emergency Contest will be run from 12:00 to 14:00 UTC. 12 March SARL March Madness YL Sprint from 09:00 till 10:00 UTC. 19 March - RTA, Programming in Windows course in Cape Town, book at www.sarl.org.za. 25 March - SAiSAT briefing session at the NARC. 2 April - SA AMSAT Space Symposium at Vodaworld, book at www.amsatsa.org.za. 15-16 April SARL National Convention at Vaal University for Technology.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items - if possible - in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 560 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'ARMI' and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 22:05 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by George, ZS6NE.

Thank you for listening, 73. /EX

===== Message Ends =====
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